

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Cultural Visitors Program ECA/PE/C/CU-10-54

Office of Citizen Exchanges

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) for the Cultural Visitors Program. Proposals must conform to the solicitation letter, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the solicitation letter is to be the dominant reference.

This document not only provides guidance for the preparation of a proposal, but also establishes guidelines for the implementation of the program.

1. STATEMENT OF WORK

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassies support a series of in-coming Cultural programs to serve special projects requested by U.S. Embassies, by ECA's foreign and domestic partners, and/or generated directly by ECA. The visitors' experiences in the United States will continue to support our message of international understanding, cultural tolerance and mutual respect. The programs will vary in length with the U.S.-based activities lasting approximately 5-30 days. Cultural Visitors will participate in activities that strengthen their professional potential through training, workshops and meetings that also provide new contacts and build networks, and that provide them with exposure to U.S. society and culture that increases their understanding of our country, of its diversity and its multiculturalism.

Please note that all Cultural Visitors exchange participants will be identified by the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassies in the relevant countries and/or ECA, with clearly identified criteria for a formal selection process. Participants will be foreign artists and arts professionals as well as youth with a special interest in the arts.

Responsibilities for this particular project include:

Responsibilities of the grantee organization for the Cultural Visitors program include:

1) Preparation

- a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, pre-departure materials, and to gather information about their specific needs;
- b) In some cases, facilitate the J-1 visa application process, working with ECA and PAS;

- c) When appropriate, assist in recruiting, screening, and selecting diverse chaperones to offer home stays (lodging and meals) to the participants during their stay in the host community(ies). “Diversity” should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, socio-economic status, and disabilities;
- d) Orient host institutions, staff, and families to the goals of the program, and to the cultures and sensitivities of the visitors;
- e) Arrange and purchase international travel for the participants in the Cultural Visitor Program. The award recipient is responsible for making domestic travel and housing arrangements for all of the participants who will participate in the programs covered under this RFGP;
- f) Enroll participants in the Bureau’s Accident and Sickness benefits plan for the period of the exchange. The Bureau will provide accident and sickness coverage at no cost to the award recipient.

2) Exchange Activities

- a) Work with the Office of Citizen Exchanges and other ECA staff to coordinate and implement an intensive and substantive program lasting approximately 5 – 30 days on the stated themes that promote the program’s goals. Recruit American participants to be engaged in activities with the exchange participants.
- b) Arrange appropriate and innovative community, cultural, social, and civic activities;
- c) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the program to prevent and/or manage any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise;
- d) Coordinate escort and/or interpreter travel and other arrangements needed for their participation;
- e) Provide a closing session for evaluation, to summarize the project activities, prepare participants for their return home, and to plan for the future.

3) Work in consultation with ECA and PAS on the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress to ECA and PAS, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.

4) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of sub-grant relationships with partner organizations.

5) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the impact of the program.

All participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program. ECA will prepare the appropriate DS-2019 forms from the applications of accepted finalists and forward these to our representatives overseas so that participants may apply for J-1 visas for entry to the United States. The award recipient must provide the relevant information in a timely fashion.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

The exchanges include, but are not limited to the following activities:

Orientations:

The award recipient will develop pre-departure materials for distribution by PAS to the Visitors, and will conduct welcome orientations for the participants to introduce and prepare them for the activities ahead. The orientations should include information related specifically to that particular Visitor's program, as well as practical and administrative information.

U.S. Program:

As noted above, visitors will spend a significant amount of their U.S. experience participating in pre-arranged programs that are the responsibility of the grantee. The activities could include a mix of workshops or training sessions, case studies, volunteer service, leadership training, meetings, classroom visits, site visits, and social time among peers. All programming should include American participants wherever possible.

The project in the United States will end with a closing session that focuses on summarizing the experience, developing action plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry. The participants should be encouraged and assisted with developing projects to implement on their return home. The ideas and action plans should be proposed by the participants, but the project staff should be prepared to assist and direct the participants in developing these plans both during the U.S.-based project, and during the follow-on period.

Home stay experiences with local host families should be considered for adult participants. Host families must be screened for suitability; selected host families must receive a thorough orientation to help them accommodate their guests' cultural and religious differences. The proposal should explain how the applicant organization's staff will assist both the participants and host families in these adjustments. Diversity will be a key factor in choosing host families. ECA will make a final determination when home stay experiences are suitable. At all other times, hotel stays must be arranged.

ECA encourages diversity in the recruitment and selection of host families. They may represent diversity in family size and structure, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and geography. Host families must have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations. Exchange participants should have their own room. Participants may be placed with host families as singles, pairs, or triples.

For programs involving minor participants at the age of 18 and under specifically, please note the following: The grant recipient must have a clear and careful recruitment, screening, and selection process for chaperones, and must also provide the chaperones with an orientation prior to the arrival of their exchange participants, emphasizing the goals of the program. Screening needs to include a visit to the hotel to meet the minor participants to ensure that the chaperone is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing environment. References should also be checked. The orientation will provide chaperones with detailed information on the exchange program, the parameters of their participation, duties, and obligations, and information on cultural differences and practices.

Minors must not have home stays under this program.

The Cultural Visitor Program is expected to include two program types – one in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and another for individual visitors with programs focused on visual arts, dance, music, literature and drama, among other genres.

Participants: The Bureau will work with the Department's U.S. Missions abroad to solicit nominations of the following participants:

- Approximately 10-16 foreign educators and/or social influencers for the Landmarks of American History Summer Workshops who are secondary school educators or other professionals with responsibilities in civics, social studies, journalism, or related fields and who will benefit from learning more about American society, politics, history and political culture.
- Approximately 30 foreign participants from fields including, but not limited to education and the arts as well as youth (ages 15-18 at the time of the exchange) with a special interest in the arts. These participants will come to the U.S. for independently designed programs and/or professional exchange programs and exposure to our culture and society.

Sites: In collaboration with the NEH's Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops, Cultural Visitors in groups of two to four will join 24-40 American K-12 teachers in historically significant locations including Mount Vernon, VA, and Harper's Ferry, WV, to explore America's founding and/or social issues including Civil Rights. Applicant organizations will need to be familiar with these sites, and must work closely with the NEH program coordinators and workshop leaders. The NEH workshops will run at least one week during the summer of 2011. Prior to or following the workshops, the Cultural Visitors will attend a five-day orientation program in Washington, D.C. In conjunction with ECA, the recipient organization will be responsible for designing and administering the D.C. orientation, and developing and implementing all logistical aspects of the program, including possible host stays and community visits. The recipient organization will be responsible for arranging and funding international and domestic travel for the Cultural Visitors.

For purposes of this proposal's budget: Please use the following Cultural Visitor program as a model: Two high school principals from Jakarta, Indonesia, will participate in a five-day orientation in Washington, D.C. and a seven-day NEH workshop or individually-designed professional study program in St. Louis, Missouri. Upon the conclusion of their workshop or study program, the two visitors will travel from St. Louis, Missouri to Atlanta, Georgia where they will experience a three-day home stay, prior to returning to Indonesia. The total length of this program will be 15 days. The recipient organization will be expected to adjust program participant numbers depending on the travel costs for the Cultural Visitors who are selected to participate in each program.

Follow-on Activities for Alumni:

Alumni activities are an important part of the Bureau's exchange programs. Each Visitor should go home with an understanding of the Alumni opportunities available through the ECA Alumni

office. Alumni participation and contact is crucial for the evaluation of the program and for the implementation of follow-on programs. All alumni contact information gathered by the award recipient on behalf of the Cultural Programs Division must be made available to the Department of State.

Evaluation:

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 require that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the long-term impact of the program. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the U.S. project on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Other Notes:

The recipient organization is responsible for all components of the program outlined in this document. However, the Bureau requires recipient organizations to communicate regularly with the ECA program officers and with the Public Affairs Sections of the relevant U.S. Embassies in participating countries. All materials and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit. All media will be coordinated by the U.S. Department of State.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. The proposal should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements. The proposal should include the following items:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)***TAB B - Executive Summary***

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Identification of all participating organizations
2. Overview of American participants who will be involved in the project
3. Nature of activity and venues

TAB C - Narrative

Within 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project

addressing the areas listed below.

1. **Participating Organizations:** Identify any partner organizations for the program, their roles, and your reasons for including them.
2. **Program:** Describe the provision of orientations, coordination of program activities with ECA, arrangements for American peers to be involved in the program, organization of cultural and social activities and closing activities.
3. **Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics:** Detail how you will arrange travel, home stays and other housing arrangements, ground transportation, stipend disbursement, and any other relevant administrative matters.
4. **Follow-on Activities:** Suggest ways that your organization, PAS and ECA might provide follow-on activities in the home country, including both ECA-funded and privately funded activities.
5. **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** The progress of the award should be monitored closely. ECA and PAS must be kept informed of activities. In the proposal, you should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique.
6. **Diversity:** Explain how the program managers will be pro-active in supporting diversity in program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly and should include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, and religious diversity.
7. **Institutional Capacity and Project Management:** Outline your capacity for doing projects of this nature, focusing on two areas of competency: Administrative and logistical competence, and the ability to provide appropriate programming. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. If applicable, include this information for primary partner organizations as well.
8. **Work Plan/Schedule:** Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire agreement period.

TAB D - Budget Submission

The maximum level of funding available for this cooperative agreement is \$500,000, which will support at minimum the projects listed in the solicitation. ECA intends to award one cooperative agreement to carry out all of these activities.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the Proposal Submission Instructions. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included. For clarification, any applicant applying to implement more than one project must provide separate sub-budgets for each.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff travel
- Educational materials

- Participant travel (domestic, local ground transportation, and international travel for select cultural programs)
- Orientations
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting costs
- Food and lodging, when not in home stay
- Interpreters, if necessary
- Follow-on activities
- Evaluation
- Stipends or allowances
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

Payments for home stays are not allowed as an award-funded or cost-share item. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Your proposal should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions, the in-country partner, and other sources.

Maximum limits on award funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; per diem-standard government rates; Evaluation costs- 5% of the award. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share rates that exceed these amounts. Please note that there are no fees for the J-1 visas that foreign participants will use to enter the United States.

Exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) with no charge to the award. Please see <http://exchanges.state.gov/aspe> for more information on coverage.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

TAB E

- Letters of commitment from any partner organizations
- Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No one resume should exceed two pages
- Attachments/appendices (please limit to those materials essential for understanding the proposed program)

TAB F

- 1.) SF-424B, "Assurances – Nonconstruction Programs".
- 2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations that have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR

Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

- 3.) **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

- 4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

REVIEW PROCESS

Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind:

1. *Program planning:* Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive

undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Program schedules should reflect innovative and relevant itineraries, and creative and dynamic meetings and site visits.

2. *Ability to achieve program objectives*: Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Your proposals should clearly demonstrate how your organization will meet the program's objectives and plan.

3. *Multiplier effect/impact*: The proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

4. *Support of Diversity*: your proposal should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

5. *Project Evaluation*: Your proposal should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique, plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives.

6. *Institution's Record/Ability/Institutional Capacity*: Your proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful international exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by the Bureau's Grants Office. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project goals.

7. *Cost-effectiveness*: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate.

ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

ECA or the award recipient (program office: please specify which) will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation
ECA/EC/D
SA-5, Floor C2
2200 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20522-0582

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The solicitation letter provides detailed instructions regarding the shipment and deadline for submission of your proposal. For further information regarding this program call LaFaye Proctor, Cultural Programs Division on (202) 632-6422, Fax: (202) 632-9355; email: ProctorLM@state.gov.